

Heartbeats by monaquinn

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Summary:

They had been dating for about two years now and he hadn't even said those three dumb words yet. He had felt them, probably had been feeling them since they were little kids with huge problems, but he never had spoken them aloud. He knew he loved her. He knew he loved her more than he knew his own name. More than all the stars in the sky, more than she thought she deserved.

Heartbeats

Author's Note:

I've fallen in love with this ship and I can't get up.
Also this show. And the characters. A lot of love.

Max and Lucas were sitting on his basement floor, looking at him with the most expectant eyes he had ever seen in his entire life. Max tapped her foot impatiently, her arms crossed over her chest during the unbearable silence.

"So, when are you gonna give it to her?" Max finally asked, gesturing to the little silver chain Mike held in his hands.

"Never!" Mike responded quickly. "It's stupid. I'm stupid. That's why I invited you guys over. To show you how stupid I am."

"No," Lucas responded, ever the sensible one, "you invited us over for reassurance. Right?"

Mike nodded shyly, looking down at the goddamn thing that had been haunting him since September of his Junior year. It was nearly Christmas now, and he still hadn't given it to her.

The clasp on his mom's necklace had broken in early September, and she had to drive Holly to daycare and couldn't go to the jeweler, so Mike offered to get it fixed for her. When he walked into the store, the stupid thing caught his eye. They had little necklaces with all the letters of the alphabet, and he bought two. One with an E and the other with an M. A dumb idea really, one of his worst yet. He figured he would give El the one with his initial and he would wear hers. Unfortunately, he chickened out every time he had the chance to give it to her.

"It'll be like an early Christmas gift!" Max cheered. "Totally cool. She'll love it."

"You have nothing to be scared about." Lucas chimed in, patting his friend on the back. "You guys have been dating since you were

twelve.”

“I asked her out freshman year. We were fourteen then.” Mike protested.

“Whatever, you’ve been practically dating since you were in 7th grade and you were all starry eyed and hid her out in your basement.” Lucas gestured to the room. Mike guessed he was technically right, but asking her officially to be his girlfriend the summer before high school was practically the scariest thing he had ever done, so he wasn’t going to let Lucas win.

“You can give it to her today.” Max added, running a hand through her ratty red hair. “You’re parents aren’t home..... and I’m sure she’ll be so excited that-“ Mike face flushed red as a fire hydrant and he tuned out the end of her sentence. Eleven and he had a slow moving relationship, unlike the other two teens in the room, and he was perfectly content with that. He didn’t want to screw things up with her. So they were going to wait a little while longer. They were only sixteen, after all. They had time.

“I’m not giving it to her today. You guys are over.”

Max and Lucas looked at each other and burst into a fit of giggles. She buried her head in his shoulder, trying to muffle the sound. Lucas’s ears burned red, and he sheepishly looked at Mike, shrugging apologetically. “We may have invited her over after school today,” he admitted, “She’ll be here in about fifteen minutes.”

Mike shot up straight, shoved the stupid stupid necklace into its box and pushed it into the pocket of his jeans. The matching one was hidden in the old Dungeons and Dragons box on the shelf. He rushed to the mirror, and tried to push his shaggy hair out of his eyes, trying to look somewhat decent. Puberty had made him lanky, skyrocketing him to six foot four. He was almost a whole foot taller than El, the lab experiments done on her as a child stunting her growth, but they made it work.

“I’ll take that as our cue to leave.” Lucas said, dragging his girlfriend towards the door.

Max grinned. "Good luck! We're gonna go see Hell-Raiser 2! God, I hope theres a lot of blood- I really didn't think the first one was gory enough and-" She was out the door of the Wheelers basement with Lucas before she could finish her sentence.

Mike tried his hardest not to freak out. The necklace wasn't a big ostentatious display or anything. It was just a simple way of saying I love you. Except for the small detail that he hadn't even said it to her yet. They had been dating for about 2 years now and he hadn't even said those three dumb words yet. He had felt them, probably had been feeling them since they were little kids with huge problems, but he never had spoken them aloud. He knew he loved her. He knew he loved her more than he knew his own name. More than all the stars in the sky, more than she thought she deserved.

He knew that if he didn't give her the necklace now, Max and Lucas would do it for him. Mike really didn't want that. El won't laugh and think its stupid, he reassured himself. However, the nagging voice in his head said she would. He slumped on the couch, face down, and thought of every possible thing that could go wrong. His inner monologue was interrupted by three quick taps on the door. The secret knock they had made in the summer of 8th grade so she would know it was him. Eleven.

"Come in!" He called out, his voice weaker than he had wanted it to be.

The door creaked open and Eleven Hopper walked into the room. She was wearing her beat up white Chucks and jeans, with a pink sweater that was a little to big on her. Her light brown hair fell to her shoulders and Mike kind of wanted to reach out and touch it. She was beautiful.

"Hey." She said softly. All of her words were tentative and soft. She still didn't speak much, but when she did, her words were carefully chosen. She spoke to him like he was only person in the world sometimes. He would give anything for those words, crafted and meant special just for him to hear. "Where is everyone? Lucas and Max said we were all going to go to the movies together, Will and Dustin too."

He stumbled over the words that came out next. "Well um- I thought we could hang out together. Just the two of us. A Date."

Her eyes seemed to light up. They hadn't been on a date in a while now that school was starting to pick up. They were both being dragged in a million different directions at once. SAT prep, physics, pre-calc, AV club, and getting their driver's licenses had really took up most of their time. They only had one class together during the school day. It was Gym, and that wasn't exactly Mikes strong suit. She made it tolerable, though. Every second they had free was spent with the party, and that was okay. They loved their friends. They both just wanted some alone time. "A date?" She asked excitedly.

"Kinda, I guess? I didn't plan anything special. I thought we could just hang out here for a while. If thats okay?"

"Perfect." she replied easily, slumping down on the couch next to him. She rested her head on his shoulder, as if it was the simplest thing in the world. His heart skipped a beat. He loved her, he loved her so much, and he wanted to tell her. Before he could say anything, she spoke. "Do you want to watch a movie still? I was looking forward to going."

"Yeah, sure." He said, going up to get the box of tapes. "I don't think you would of liked the movie Max and Lucas wanted to see anyway."

She shrunk back into the couch. "Bloody?" she asked. El had decided she hated films with a lot of gore a few years back. She had lived through it, killed people, and just didn't like to see stuff that reminded her of murder. Mike understood, and honestly didn't love gore and horror so much either after that night in the hallway, so many years ago.

He dug through the box of old movies, finally pulling out something satisfactory. "Back to the Future okay?" he asked. They had seen the movie on a date freshman year. One of their first. He remembered kissing her sneakily in the back row, hoping nobody else in the theater would notice. She nodded, and he put the tape into the television, pressing play.

Slumping down in the couch, Eleven found her way to his lap,

snuggling in-between his legs. He put his arms around her, breathing softly. Not really paying attention to the film, he had seen it a million times, he began to play with her soft hair. It was a guilty pleasure of his to twist it into little braids and run his fingers through it. Her hair was a sign of her freedom, she had gone through the worst abuse and her long hair proved she had made it out alive. Honestly, he wouldn't care if she shaved it all off again. He wouldn't care if she had three heads. However, he loved her curls, and enjoyed playing with the long locks of hair.

It was now or never. He had to tell her, give her the gift. It had been four years of dating, six of knowing her, and the feelings he held in his heart ran through his blood stream, deep in his bones. It was silly to say, but he loved her with every fiber of his being. She was perfect, too good for him in his opinion, but she had chosen him. Chosen him way back on that November night in the rain, waited for him during that cold year alone, and had been by his side ever since.

"El?" He asked softly, breaking the silence.

She turned her focus away from the movie and onto him. "Yeah?"

"I uh, got you a early Christmas gift, and was wondering if you—"

Never getting a gift for the first twelve years of her life really made El love presents. "Yes!" she exclaimed, cutting her boyfriend off. She shifted off of his lap, and sat facing him on the couch expectantly.

He pulled the little velvet box out of his pocket and handed it to her, holding his breath. She opened it, and held up the chain, looking at it questionably. "Its a necklace." He blurted out, "I saw it at the store and thought It would be kind of cool if you wore my initial and I could wear yours. I bought one with an E on it, I didn't know if you would prefer a J for Jane, but I never really call you Jane so I thought an E would be okay. It's nothing big really. I just kind of thought it would be a way to show that I- I love you."

Not focusing on the necklace anymore, her brown eyes met his. She smiled. "You love me?" She asked, elated.

"Yeah- I mean if thats okay—" He stumbled out.

She leaned over and pecked him on the lips. “Nobodies ever said that to me before,” she admitted shyly, “I love you, Mike.”

There was nothing to fear now. He placed his hand on her cheek and kissed her gently, letting all his feelings be known. She pressed closer to him, her hand that wasn’t clutching the necklace pulling at his hair. This was somewhat different than the hundreds of other kisses they had shared before. This one was so tender and honest and simply right. There were no unspoken truths holding them back anymore. The words no longer trapped behind their lips. His eyes fluttered open and met her big beautiful brown ones.

“I love you El.”

“I love you too, Michael Wheeler. Now help me get this on.” She placed the necklace in his cupped palms, and he placed it on her neck, struggling only slightly with the silver clasp. “Wheres yours?” She inquired.

“Oh. I um- I hid it in the old game box on the shelf. I knew you wouldn’t ever go in there.” He began to stand to go get the necklace, but she held him back. Flicking her wrist, the box opened and the necklace floated over to them. El grabbed a tissue from her pocket and quickly wiped the small trickle of blood that had ran from her nose.

“You really didn’t need to do that.” He muttered. He hated seeing her bleed.

“I wanted too.” She grinned, twirling the small sliver chain through her fingers. “I like the E. Elevens my name, it’s a little sad that I didn’t get a real one, but its my name. I’ll never feel like a Jane.”

He nodded, glad his gut instinct had been right. She pulled the chain around his neck, clasping it, and slipping it under his shirt. The cool metal hit his skin, a constant reminder of her to keep with him at all times.

With a shaky hand, she reached out and put a hand over his heart. She closed her eyes, and smiled. “I can feel your heart.” She whispered.

“Yeah?”

“It’s going kind of fast,” she murmured, a light smirk forming on her face.

“That’s because I’m sitting next to the girl I love, you doofus.” He joked, ruffling her hair. “I love you.”

“You said that already, Mike.” A light blush came over El’s face.

“Well, get used to it. I’m going to say it a lot now. I love El Hopper” He stated, simple, like a fact. Mike got off the couch, cupped his hands in front of his face and shouted, “I love El Hopper! I, Michael Wheeler am in love with El Hopper!” Laughing, El got up and joined in. They did it for a while, the words circling the the basement, an endless sea of I love you’s”. Nobody was in the house to hear them, but it felt nice, saying the words so loud that anyone could hear.

She jumped into his arms, kissing him in-between their giggling fits. She traced her lips down his neck, sometimes whispering the words between kisses. His mouth found hers, and he decided then and there that this was the best day of his life.

Many years later, on their wedding day, he would change his mind.

Author's Note:

Please send me a comment if you liked it? That would make me happy! Also, if you have any suggestions send em in :)